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BELIEFS AND PRACTICES RELATING TO BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD AMONG THE GALICIAN UKRAINIANS

I. Pregnancy and Birth

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Pregnancy, to the Ukrainian peasant, is a phenomenon surrounded by mysterious forces which, if offended in any way, are sure to bring misfortune upon the expectant mother and her unborn child. A pregnant woman is treated with consideration, and is usually showered with wishes for an easy confinement. A person mistreating an expectant mother exposes himself and his household to harm.[1] In the belief that labour pains, especially acute ones, are not inevitable but are caused by evil powers,

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[1] *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England*, by G. R. Owst, Cambridge, 1933. P. 99. Reinfelden's Moralization is in MS. Egerton 2419.

[1] Kaindl, R. F., *Die Huzulen: Ihr Leben, ihre Sitten, und ihre Volksüberlieferung* (Wien, 1894), p. 4.

843 784 789 the Ukrainian peasant woman keeps her pregnancy as secret as possible. The Devil and persons with supernatural powers will thus be kept in ignorance and, consequently, be prevented from interfering in any way with her accouchement.[2] The expectant mother therefore avoids mentioning her condition to any one except the midwife. A husband, for the same reason, dislikes to speak of his wife's pregnancy.[3] Some women, especially among the mountaineers (*hutzuls*), even wind about themselves a broad strip of woollen bandage, in order to hide their condition. So tightly is the bandage wrapped that it has a definite effect upon the child, which is usually very small at birth; in order to assure its normal development the midwife, upon delivering it, exclaims: "Now grow!"[4]

[847] A child is, as a rule, a welcome addition to the family. Hence an enceinte woman, legitimately married, rarely attempts abortion or infanticide.[5] On the contrary, she is greatly concerned to give birth to a healthy child, and in order to assure herself of this, she cautiously watches nearly every step she takes and strictly observes a variety of taboos. The precautions and taboos, both before and after birth, are based in most cases on the belief that things or actions produce similar results. In other words, certain objects that the pregnant woman may see or touch, certain foods that she may eat, and certain phenomena that she may observe, hear, or feel, will register a corresponding effect upon her child. Wherever, therefore, the consequences are obviously undesirable, a pregnant woman tries to avoid doing or observing the thing in question, or, if this is impossible, to guard against them by certain means which are usually imitative in nature. A few examples follow.

[13] [2] Kolberg, O., *Pokucie: Obraz Etnograficzny* (4 vols., Kraków, 1882–1889), i, 208.

[3] *Idem.*

[4] Szuchiewicz, W., *Huculszczyzna* (4 vols., Lwów, 1902–1908), ii, 2.

[5] Unmarried girls, on the other hand, very often take steps to dispose of their unborn children. Cf. Koenig, S., "Marriage and the Family among the Galician Ukrainians," in *Studies in the Science of Society*, G. P. Murdock (Editor) (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1937), pp. 302–303.

843 If a pregnant woman looks fixedly at a person, or for that
784 matter if he stares at her, her child will be pretty or the reverse,
789 depending on that person's appearance. She therefore tries not to look at or be seen by an ugly individual.[6] She also avoids looking at a fisherman, lest her child will have a restless nature.[7] Neither must she watch a horse shaking its head, or her child will be constantly subject to similar behaviour.[8] If, on the other hand, she happens to see a galloping steed, her pregnancy will last twelve months.[9] Upon observing a mouse, an expectant mother must spit and touch her abdomen; otherwise her child will be born with a mark resembling a mouse on its body. A fire in the village may have a similar effect; if a woman is frightened by it and does not spit immediately, her unborn child will have the mark of a flame on its body. Should a pregnant woman eat an apple at the approach of her confinement, warts are likely to appear on the face of her child;[10] and if the apple be a stolen one, the child will grow up to be a thief.[11]

843 Definite signs enable one to predict the sex of an unborn child. If the prospective mother eats her meals with a good appetite, for example, it is a sign that she will have a boy; otherwise her child will be a girl. According to another indication, if the woman is to have a boy large spots appear on her face before her confinement, but if her face remains smooth and white
844 she is sure to have a girl.[12] The destiny of the child, and even
777 of the parents, can be foretold from certain omens. If birth
787 occurs around noon the child is destined to be unfortunate, while a baby born at daybreak will be lucky.[13] The crowing of a cock during birth is a bad omen. The birth of twins presages disaster, *e.g.*, the imminent death of one of the parents or the

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[6] Kolessa, J., "Narodziny i chrzciny, wesele i pogrzeb u ludu ruskiego," *Zbiór Wiadomości do Antropologii Krajowej*, xii (Kraków, 1889) 117; Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, p. 4.

[7] Kaindl, *ibid.*, p. 4.

[8] Kolessa, in *Zbiór Wiad. do Antr. Kraj.*, xiii, 117.

[9] Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, p. 4.

[10] Szuchiewicz, *op. cit.*, ii, 1.

[11] Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, p. 4.

[12] Kolberg, *Pokucie*, iii, 174.

[13] Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, p. 4.

844 777 787 impoverishment and consequent ruin of the homestead.[14] According to another version, the birth of twins or triplets is a general punishment from God.[15] Since eating two potatoes, two apples, or two plums would result in her having twins, a pregnant woman is most careful to abstain therefrom.[16] A child born before the ninth month indicates that the woman has been unfaithful to her husband.[17]

843 844 The Ukrainian peasant woman, as a rule, goes about her daily tasks uninterruptedly until the very onset of labour pains. The mountainee. woman in particular, owing to her robustness, seems to give birth with an unusual ease and unconcern. Besides attending to her routine work in the house, she is occupied at a period very close to her confinement with such work as milking cows, constructing fences, and pitching hay. Only a woman who is constitutionally weak takes to bed when she feels that her accouchement is not far off. Others often deliver their babies wherever they happen to be at the time—in the barn milking, in the field, or anywhere else. Sometimes a woman goes up to the attic, and after a few moments hands her baby down to someone below and then climbs down after it.[18] Women have even been known to return from market with a newborn baby in their arms and a sack full of purchased articles on their backs. In order to avoid leaving blood spots behind her in case she delivers her baby outside of the home, a woman who expects to give birth at any moment often puts on a pair of men's trousers under her dress when leaving the house.

844 Birth itself is surrounded by a mass of practices, again mostly imitative in nature, which are concerned rather with the well-being of the infant than with preserving the health of the mother.[19] When the hour of confinement arrives the husband repairs to call the midwife (*baba*), who is usually a woman with

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[14] Kolessa, J., "Ludowy wiruwania na pidhirju," *Etnograficznyj Zbirnyk*, v (Lwów, 1898), 83.

[15] Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, p. 5.

[16] Kolessa, in *Etnograficznyj Zbirnyk*, v, 83.

[17] Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, p. 4. [18] Szuchiewicz, *op. cit.*, ii, 2.

[19] Vowk, C., *Studii z Ukrainskoi Etnografii ta Antropologii* (Praha, n.d.), p. 188.

844 obstetrical experience. The first act of the *baba* is to give the mother a generous dose of whisky to ease her pains. Then she makes her walk thrice around the table, opening and loosening all closed, covered, or tied objects, such as benches, shelves, closets, and boxes; this has the effect of easing the birth of the child. This done, the midwife takes consecrated wreaths of herbs and holds them over the fire, to fumigate the confined woman with their smoke. If all this fails to have the desired effect, and the delivery proceeds with difficulty, the *baba* runs to the church and begs the sexton to lend her the girdle worn by the priest at divine service; returning home, she winds this about the woman and the child is then born with the greatest of ease.[20]

A woman usually delivers her baby in either a kneeling or a standing position. At times, when the case is especially difficult, she is led around in the room by two women, who grasp her under the arms. When delivery begins, the mother kneels down upon a cover spread out on the floor and deposits the
844 baby upon it.[21] The midwife takes the child as soon as it is
777 born, and holding it head down, beats thrice with the soles of its feet on the centre beam of the ceiling, so that it will grow up as strong as the beam. She then makes the sign of the cross over it, sprinkles some holy water on its head, and gives it a warm bath. If the baby is a girl, she puts into the bath some honey, mint, and other sweet-smelling herbs, so that it may grow up to be a sweet and pleasant girl.[22] The water of the bath is not poured out until the following morning; otherwise "the sleep of the child will be carried out along with it."[23]

Having dried the child at the fire, bundled it up, and put it on the oven to sleep, the midwife prepares a bed for the mother
844 at the corner of the oven. Under the sheet she puts some hay
784 consecrated with holy water, and on the bar over the bed she hangs a large sheet to separate the bed from the rest of the room.
789 Before the mother lies down, however, the *baba* takes care to tie a piece of garlic on her chest and to place near her, on the

[20] Kolberg, *Pokucie*, i, 211.

[21] *Ibid.*, iii, 174; Szuchiewicz, *op. cit.*, ii,

[22] Kolberg, *Pokucie*, iii, 175.

[23] Kolessa, in *Zbiór Wiad. do Antr. Kraj.*, xiii, 117.

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844 bed, a knife and some keys, because iron has the power to
784 drive away evil forces.[24]

789 A precaution never forgotten is to light a candle immediately after the delivery; otherwise the baby, not being baptized as yet, would surely be harmed by lurking evil forces. Under no circumstances must the light be extinguished, at least not until holy water is obtained from the priest and sprinkled over the mother, the baby, and the entire room.[25] Besides this essential precaution, a multitude of other means are taken to protect the child and assure its healthy growth. As soon as possible after birth, for example, there is tied to the right wrist of the infant a little sack, called *szkalytoczka*, which contains the following articles: a piece of garlic—to make the child as sharp as this vegetable; a piece of clay from the oven—to make it as immune to the evil eye as is the oven; a piece of coal—to make the eyes of whoever casts upon it an evil glance burn like coal; some dust from the tracks of a dog—so that people will stare at it no more than they do at a dog's tracks. A small wooden cross is likewise hung on the infant's neck.[26] A mother must not turn her back upon her baby lest it turn yellow,[27] or be taken by a superhuman woman, the *diwa-baba*,[28] in exchange for a brat of hers. Nothing in the house may be given away on the day of birth, or the child will be given to sleeplessness. Whoever takes a glance at a newborn infant must spit immediately—to make sure that the child has not been bewitched.[29] Throughout the first night, some member of the family must keep watch, so that nothing may befall the child.[30]

777 A person's destiny, it is believed, is determined immediately upon his birth, at which moment twelve invisible judges convene on the window-sill near the table. Eleven of them pronounce

[24] *Idem.*

[25] Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, p. 5. [26] Szuchiewicz, *op. cit.*, ii, 4.

[27] Kolessa, in *Zbiór Wiad. do Antr. Kraj.*, xiii, 118.

[113] [28] Regarding the nature of this mysterious woman, see Koenig, S., "Supernatural Beliefs among the Galician Ukrainians," *Folk-Lore*, xlix (Sept. 1938), 274.

[29] Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, pp. 4–5.

[30] Kolessa, in *Zbiór Wiad. do Antr. Kraj.*, xiii, 118.

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777 various prophecies as to the future of the child, but final decision rests with the oldest, whose judgment prevails. These same judges grant the child a star, which shines only so long as he [776] lives; upon his death it falls to earth. Every person at birth likewise receives a guardian angel, whose duty it is to protect him throughout his life. Before starting any new task, and especially when in danger, the peasant calls upon his ministering angel for assistance, saying: "Guardian angel, help me!"[31] Since one's fate is determined at birth, one can do little to change it. This explains, in the popular mind, why one man is poor and another rich, one healthy and another sick, why one lives long and another dies young. It also explains why there are all kinds of children in the world, and why even children of the same parents often differ so markedly.[32]

845 A deformed or mentally deficient child is ascribed to the act 732 of an evil spirit, particularly the *diwa-baba*. Such a child has a large head, is always lean, and can never be satiated. With his tremendous appetite he suckles so ravenously that his mother's breast finally withers away. Such a child causes constant trouble, is retarded in its growth and short-lived, and does not reach a stature commensurate with his age until after death.[33]

II. Christening Ceremonies

851 While great secrecy surrounds pregnancy and birth, the 553 ceremonies that follow are ushered in with the greatest publicity. As soon as she has attended to the child and the mother, the midwife begins to make preparations for the christening (*chrestyny*), [777] which must take place immediately. A child who is allowed to remain unbaptized over night is exposed to all sorts of dangers. If at all possible, therefore, an infant is taken to church to be baptized on the very day it is born, even though the hour be late in the evening, the weather extremely unfavourable, and the distance considerable.[34] While the father, who takes

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[31] Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, p. 5. [32] Szuchiewicz, *op. cit.*, iv, 287.

[33] Kaindl, R. F., "Zauberglaube bei den Huzulen," *Globus*, lxxvi (Braunschweig, 1899), 256.

[34] Kolberg, *Pokucie*, iii, 113; Szuchiewicz, *op. cit.*, ii, 6.

while the father, who takes

851 a passive part throughout the ceremony,[35] busies himself with
608 supplying the assembled guests with drinks, the *baba* repairs to
553 the village to invite the godparents (*kumy*) to the christening. The number of men and women asked to act in this capacity ranges from a single couple to as many as fifteen, depending upon the wealth and social status of the parents. The most desirable godparents are the couple who acted as best man and
851 maid of honour at the wedding of the parents.[36] A pregnant
608 woman, too, is considered a most acceptable godmother, for a
784 child held during baptism by such a woman is assured of good
777 luck. An enceinte woman, however, seldom consents to play the rôle, since her own child may be harmed thereby.[37] The wealthier and more prominent the godparents, the more desirable they are. If the parents have been unfortunate in rearing children, however, they invite a couple of wandering beggars to act as godparents and treat them with the greatest of courtesy. This, it is asserted, will change the luck of the parents, and will make the child grow and be healthy.[38] For two women to reciprocate as godmothers is considered not only unwise but a downright sin.[39] Near neighbours, too, make anything but good godparents. Since the two families live in close contact, it is almost inevitable that a quarrel shall sometime arise between them, and tradition as well as propriety strongly disapproves of unfriendly relations with one's *kumy*.[40] Contrary to what one might expect, for a gypsy to hold a child at baptism is supposed to bring it good luck, especially in trade and horse-raising.[41]

851 The midwife approaches the people selected as godparents
608 with these words: "May God grant you health! The mother
553 of the baby has sent me to ask you to do her the favour of holding her child during baptism." If they agree to undertake the function, they either follow her to the house a little later or else promise to meet her in the church at a designated hour.

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[35] According to D. Zelenin, *Russische (Ostslavische) Volkskunde* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1927), p. 295, the passivity may be explained by the fact that he is, like his wife, considered unclean.

[36] Kolberg, *Pokucie*, i, 208–211.

[37] Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, p. 0.

[38] Kolberg, *Pokucie*, i, 210.

[39] *Idem.*

[40] Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, p. 6.

[41] *Idem.*

851 553 Upon returning home, she swathes the baby and takes a piece of bread and a knife, but does not leave the house until the mother has wiped the infant with her shirt to protect it from the evil eye. On the doorstep the *baba* makes the sign of the cross over the child, and sometimes another woman sprinkles it with holy water. The same procedure is repeated on the other side of the door. Here, however, the midwife sticks her knife into the door, and leaves it for some member of the household to remove later.[42]

If the godparents have come to the house, they follow the midwife, each carrying a long piece of linen (*krytmo*) and a candle, while the father bears a hen, two loaves of bread, and a " head " of salt as a present for the priest. At the church, all kneel down while some of the godparents remove the swaddling clothes and two others hold the sides of the *krytmo* on which the infant is placed. The priest, after lighting the candles and handing them back to the participants, reads a prayer, then turns to them and repeats thrice the question : " Do you renounce the evil spirit? " To this, the *baba* and the godparents, turning their heads to the door, reply : " We renounce! " The priest next asks them : " Are you willing to serve God and Jesus Christ? " Each godparent then hands over to the priest his piece of linen, which later becomes the property of the child. After these preliminaries comes the actual christening, which differs little from the usual Catholic ceremony. The name given the child is usually that of the saint who presides over that particular day. For boys, the most popular names are Iwan, Hryć, Hawrylo, Nykola, Michajlo, and Petro ; for girls, Maryja, Katerina, Hanna, and Paraska.[43] Children, even twins, are usually baptized in church ; only in the case of triplets does the priest go [793] to the house of the parents to perform the ceremony. Among the highlanders, it is believed that a widowed priest who learns of the birth of triplets, and goes voluntarily to the house, is allowed to remarry.[44] After the ceremony the sexton extin-

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[42] Kolberg, *Przemyskie* (Kraków, 1891), p. 49 ; Kolessa, in *Zbiór Wiad. do Antr. Kraj.*, xiii, 118.

[43] Kolberg, *Przemyskie*, pp. 49–50 ; *Pokucie*, i, 209.

[44] Szuchiewicz, *op. cit.*, ii, 6 ; ordinarily a uniate priest is allowed to marry only once—prior to his being ordained.

851 553 guishes the candles, appropriates half of them himself, and returns the rest to the participants, who must light them again in the room where the mother is confined.[45] If the candles are not easily extinguished, it is a sign that the baptized child will have a long life.[46]

851 574 In some localities the godparents leave immediately after the close of the ceremony for the house of the parents, where a festive dinner is served; in most places, however, they return to their homes and go to the party in the evening.[47] The midwife, upon her return, greets the mother with these words: "You have given us the child born; we, however, return it to you [777] sacrificed and baptized." She then places the infant on a black fur coat (*kozuch*), which is thought to bring luck, and hands it over on the coat to the mother.[48]

At the christening dinner the father again plays a most inconspicuous rôle, the midwife and the godparents being the principal [431] actors. Each guest brings presents of foodstuffs, chiefly beans, peas, eggs, cheese, salt, and bread. After a flood of greetings and congratulations, the women give their presents to the mother, placing them on her bed, while the men hand their gifts, usually loaves of bread, to the father.[49]

After these preliminaries, the guests seat themselves at the table. The master of the house serves each of them with a drink of whisky, and the midwife or the cook places before each an appetizer consisting of a piece of meat or another delicacy. The courses served at this meal are as numerous and elaborate as those of a wedding dinner. They usually include meat with gravy, *holubci* (grouts enveloped in cabbage leaves), *pirohy* (potatoes or grouts enveloped in dough), sour cream, *borszcs* (beet soup), and many other dishes, depending, of course, upon the economic status of the parents. Whisky is lavishly provided, and each guest offers a toast before every drink. It is interesting to note that, if the baby be a boy, the godparents,

[45] Kolberg, *Pokucie*, i, 209. [46] Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, p. 6.

[47] Kolberg, *Pokucie*, i, 209.

[113] [48] Jandaurek, J., *Das Königreich Galizien und Lodomerien und das Herzogtum Bukowina* (Wien, 1884), p. 62.

[49] Kolberg, *Pokucie*, i, 210.

†[christening -- Analyst]

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851 574 in drinking, imitate the motions of a person cutting straw, while in the case of a girl the motions are those of a woman washing clothes.[50]

Towards the end of the dinner the *baba* drinks an individual toast to each of the godparents and throws what remains in the glass at the ceiling. She then hands them each a goblet of whisky on a plate. After offering a toast and emptying his goblet, each puts a few coins on the plate, which the midwife takes individually to the mother. In some localities it is customary for the oldest godmother to put the infant upon a pillow and carry it around from guest to guest while holding a candle in her other hand; a younger godmother follows her with a plate, upon which everyone, beginning with the father, places some money as a gift for the child; the midwife, meanwhile, makes little bouquets of herbs and distributes them among the guests, receiving from each a few coins for herself.[51]

The christening festivities are marked by great hilarity, drinking, and the singing of songs designed for the occasion. When begun in the evening, they are prolonged far into the night, the men sometimes spending the whole night at the party; when begun in the morning, they last throughout the day. The parents keep open house. People come and go all day, bringing gifts and drinking to the health of the mother and child. The festivities may be extended to the second and even the third day—celebrations lasting a whole week are by no means rare—the parents being expected to supply the thronging visitors with food and drink.[52] Indeed, christening parties, along with wedding and funeral celebrations, have been the major cause in the impoverishment of many a peasant household.[53]

844 The midwife is formally dismissed on the third day, when she comes to carry out the hay and to change the bedding. She receives in payment a few coins, a loaf of bread, and, in the case of a firstborn child, also a piece of linen.[54] In a little ceremony, which marks the dismissal, the mother thrice pours water over

[50] Kolberg, *Pokucie*, i, 209–210; *Przemyskie*, p. 50.

[51] Kolberg, *Pokucie*, i, 212; *Przemyskie*, p. 50.

[52] Kolberg, *Pokucie*, i, 210. [53] *Idem.*

[54] Kolessa, in *Zbiór Wiad. do Antr. Kraj.*, xiii, 119–120.

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844 the hands of the midwife and dries them with the linen presented to the latter. Then both women shake hands over the child, and beg one another three times for forgiveness for the troubles each has had to undergo.[55]

846 783 The mother is considered strictly unclean for three days, the period of the midwife's attendance. Nevertheless, she usually leaves her bed on the second or third day and performs her routine tasks about the house. She must not, however, go farther than thirty-five steps from the dwelling, lest she defile the fields which she might pass.[56] Indeed, she may not even take these few steps without carrying a knife with her.[57] The period during which the mother is not considered entirely clean lasts from three to six weeks, depending upon the locality. At the termination of this period a formal purification ceremony (*wywód* = leading out) is performed in the church by the priest. On the day of the ceremony, the midwife comes to take the mother to church. The latter dresses up in her best clothes, and is sprinkled by the midwife with holy water. Taking the baby in her arms, and carrying a knife, a few keys, some garlic, and a piece of bread, she follows the midwife to the church. Arriving at the entrance, she kneels with the child in her arms and awaits the priest. When he enters, she follows him to the small altar where the christening took place some weeks before. Here the priest, after performing a special ceremony, pronounces her entirely clean.[58]

852 608 574 After the purification rite, often as much as two years later, comes a ceremony which, more than any other, reveals the closeness of the bond that must have once existed between godparents and child. The parents of the child inquire of the godparents whether they will accept a present of *kolaczy*, twisted loaves of wheat bread, from which the ceremony is named *kolaczyny*. If the godparents agree, as they invariably do, the parents set a day for the celebration. Should the godparents have acted in the same capacity at the baptism of other children,

[55] Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, p. 6.

[56] Szuchiewicz, *op. cit.*, ii, 7.

[57] Kolessa, in *Zbiór Wiad. do Antr. Kraj.*, xiii, 119.

[58] *Idem.*

852 608 574 they invite all the parents of such children to participate in the celebration. On the appointed day the godparents prepare a festive dinner for the parents, who bring a goodly supply of whisky and six *kolaczy* each. If the child is still alive, the parents give the *kolaczy* to the godparents immediately, saying: "Please, *kumy*, accept the *kolaczy*; from God they come large, from us small." But if the child has died in the meantime, they first light candles and then place them and the loaves of bread on the floor, saying: "Please accept the *kolaczy* for the welfare of the soul of N. N." [59]

Friends and neighbours, as well as relatives, are invited to the *kolaczyny*, and all participate in the singing, dancing, and games that follow the dinner and often last till the next morning. The parents, when they depart, are given back one of the *kolaczy*, and in addition receive a calf, a sheep, a lamb, or a pig, depending upon the means of the godparents, as a gift for the child. Around the neck of such animal they always tie a red ribbon. If the godparent has no animal to give, he presents his godchild with a piece of clothing.[60]

III. Childhood

842 Only when a boy is born, as a rule, do the parents feel proud. A peasant, asked what "God gave him," will answer: "*Chlopcie!*" (a boy); but if the baby be a girl, he will reply: "*Detynu!*" (a child), as though trying to avoid mentioning its sex.[61]

854 For some time the mother keeps her infant in bed beside her, mainly in order to keep close watch over it. After a while, however, it is put into a cradle, a box made of boards, suspended by means of ropes from the bar above the mother's bed. It is hung at the foot of the bed so that it can easily be rocked at night. A red apple is usually suspended on a string above the head of the baby—to provide it with something to look at and play with.[62] Boxes on rockers, too, are quite common.[63] Special care is taken to assure the child undisturbed sleep. A visitor

[59] Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, p. 7.
[60] *Idem.*
[61] Kolberg, *Pokucie*, i, 19.
[62] Kolberg, *Pokucie*, iii, 101.
[63] Szuchiewicz, *op. cit.*, iii, 7.

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854 at a house where there is a newborn baby, even though he stays only a very short while, must sit down for a moment, or else the child will remain restless the whole day. No article may be lent from the house after sunset for the same reason.[64]

The swaddling clothes (*pelenky*) consist of linen rags in which the baby is wrapped, after its hands have been fastened to the body by a ribbon or string. A little hay covered by a coarse piece of linen serves as bedding. Once in place, the rags are hardly ever changed, so that they often practically rot away
852 under the child. What the mother seems more concerned with is to assure the child of a healthy growth of hair. Hence when the baby is a month old she cuts off its hair, puts it in a corner of the room, and says: "Look where I am placing your hair, so that in the other world you may know where to get it." This reflects the belief that every person must bring with him to the other world some part of his body. The locks from the head of a girl are usually inserted in the stem of a rotten willow tree, that she may have later a beautiful head of hair.[65]

853 The mother, especially among the *hutzuls*, seldom nurses the baby herself. The reason lies mainly in the fact that the peasant women often lack sufficient milk. The mother, however, ascribes this lack to witchcraft or the evil eye. Particularly around Christmas time is the nursing mother thought to be exposed to this sort of bewitchment. Nine days after Christmas, it is believed, the *diwe-baby* go around drying up the milk of Christian mothers to make their children waste away, that they may the more easily substitute their own.[66] The children, consequently, are fed from a cow's, goat's, or ram's horn cut off at the point, or, in more recent years, from a commercial nipple. Children six months old are fed mainly on buckwheat grouts dissolved in milk and on pieces of rye bread boiled in water. Somewhat older children eat the same food as adults, but continue at the same time to suckle at the breast or bottle.[67] A mother is especially anxious to train her child not to be fastidious

[64] K[illegible]essa, in *Etnograficznyj Zbirnyk*, v, 83–84.

[65] Szuchiewicz, *op. cit.*, ii, 7.

[66] Szuchiewicz, *Huculszczyzna*, ii, 7. [67] Zelenin, *op. cit.*, p. 302.

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853 regarding food. For this reason she often makes it drink a spoonful of dishwater immediately after birth or weaning.[68]

857 Children mean additional working hands, and hence an increased source of income to the peasant's household. The older the boy or girl gets, the more indispensable does he become in the house, helping his father or mother. When scarcely eight years of age, he runs all sorts of errands, carries his father's lunch out to the distant fields all by himself, rides the horses to water, drives the cattle out to pasture—in a word, learns to depend upon himself. At the age of twelve he already performs practically all the tasks of an adult, sometimes working even harder than his parents.

869 From its very infancy the child is inculcated with various
784 folk beliefs. It is taught, for example, not to spit on the fire, lest it get the mark of a flame on its face; not to eat apples before St. Spas (18th August, O.S.), lest frogs multiply in its belly; never, in the case of a girl, to walk backwards, lest she remain long unmarried; and not to throw away the nails that it bites off its fingers but to hide them in its bosom, for they belong to the Devil, who will demand them after death.[69]

852 The life of a boy is marked by no special ceremonies until the time of courtship. In the case of a girl, the only formal ceremony occurs in her sixth year, when her hair is put up for the first time. Before that age, her tresses fall freely about her shoulders. For the ceremony the mother invites a woman, called *sochtiwna*, who is experienced in such matters. Gathering the girl's hair from her forehead and from the back and both sides of her head, the woman ties the four strands together in the centre, saying: "As I am tying your hair from all four sides that it may adhere together, so may boys, widowers, sons of wealthy parents, and the most distinguished youths of the land seek you from all directions; whoever shall see you shall swoon for you, as a fish does for water." The parents thenceforth usually pay a little more attention to their daughter's appearance; at least they try to see to it that she wears another garment in addition to her shirt.

[68] Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, p. 7.

[69] *Ibid.*, ii, 10–11.

[69] Szuchiewicz, *op. cit.*, ii, 10.

857 Before the age of twelve or thirteen, boys and girls rarely ever play together or have any other contact with each other. Whenever children are seen at play, a strict separation of the sexes is noticed. This is not the result of any special instruction on the part of the parents, and still less the outcome of imitation. [562] Besides their different spheres of interest, the boys manifest a certain pride and self-consciousness which causes them to band together, leaving the girls to themselves. With puberty, however, boys and girls mix freely and seek each other's company. Peasant children scarcely recognize any distinction between rich and poor; the sons and daughters of the wealthy associate with those of the poor without consciousness of superiority or inferiority on either side.[71]

538 861 593 The philosophy of parents with regard to the training of their children, in so far as they can be said to have one, is summed up in the following proverbial expressions: "The granting of freedom to children means the constraint of the parents";[72] or, "Give the children freedom and you will find yourself in slavery."[73] Other examples of folk wisdom reveal a similar attitude: "A child will not grow up without a rod." "Do not give in to a child." "Love your child with your heart and drive it with your hands."[74] "Love your child like your soul, and shake it like the pear tree."[75] The burden of rearing children, although actually not very heavy, is, nevertheless, a source of complaint and finds expression in proverbs, *e.g.*, "To feed a child is like carrying a rock." "Small children don't let you sleep, and big ones don't let you live." "Whoever has no children does not know what trouble is."[76] Other proverbs reflect an opposite attitude towards children: "A mother of ten is a joy."[77] "If God grants children, He will provide for them."[78]

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[71] Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, pp. 8–9.

[72] Franko, I., "Halicko-ruski narodni prypowidky," *Etnografičnyj Zbirnyk* (vols. xvi, xxiii–xxiv, Lwów, 1903–1908), xvi, 562.

[73] *Ibid.*, pp. 563–564.

[74] Franko, *op. cit.*, pp. 564, 600.

[75] Franko, *op. cit.*, p. 598.

[76] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

[77] Kaindl, *Die Huzulen*, p. 8.

[78] Kolberg, *Pokucie*, iii, 179.